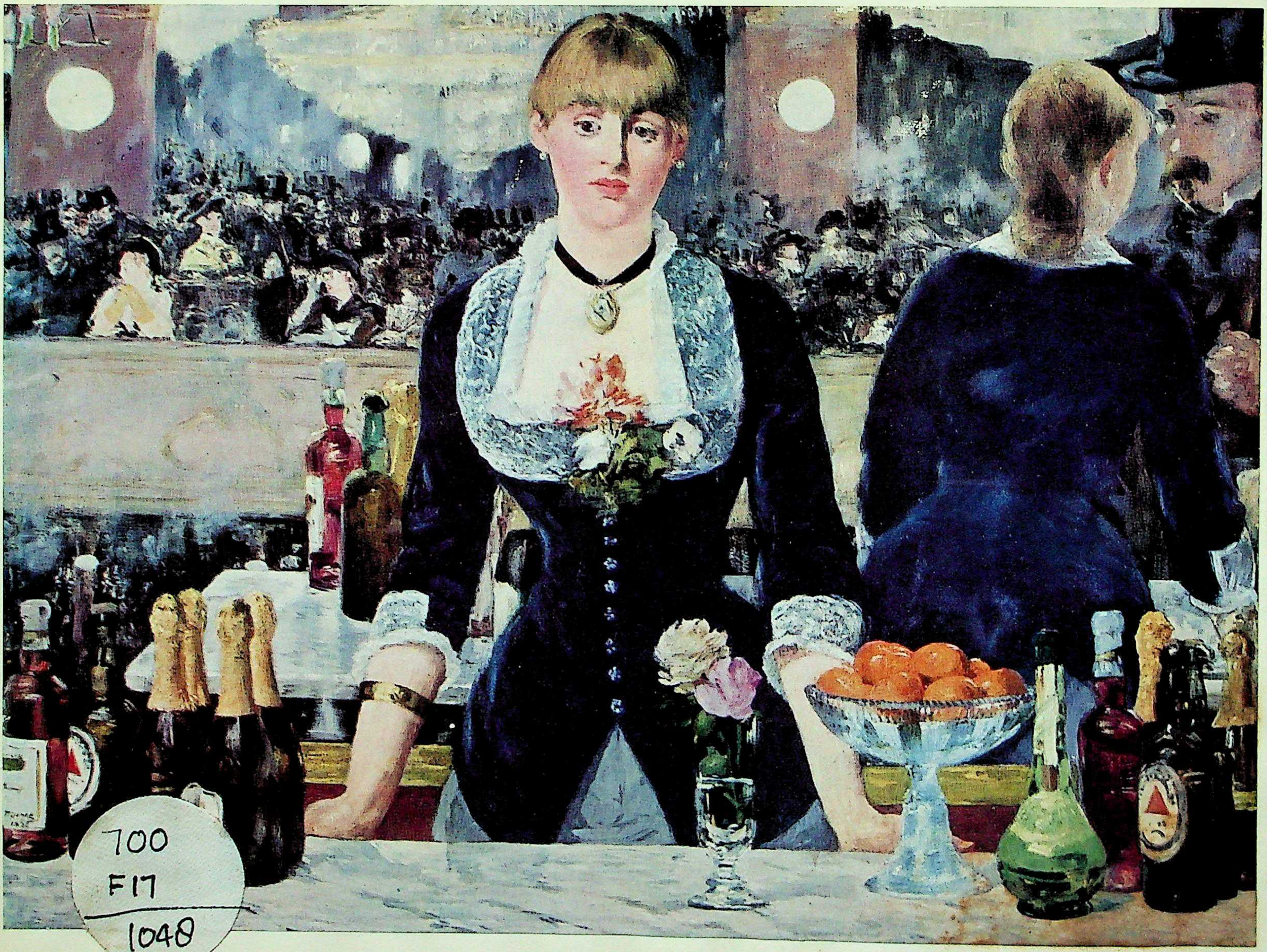
Manet



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16 BEAUTIFUL FULL COLOUR PRINTS

MANET

(PLATE ONE)
ON THE COVER: *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1881)
Courtauld Institute of Art, London. 37¾″ × 50″

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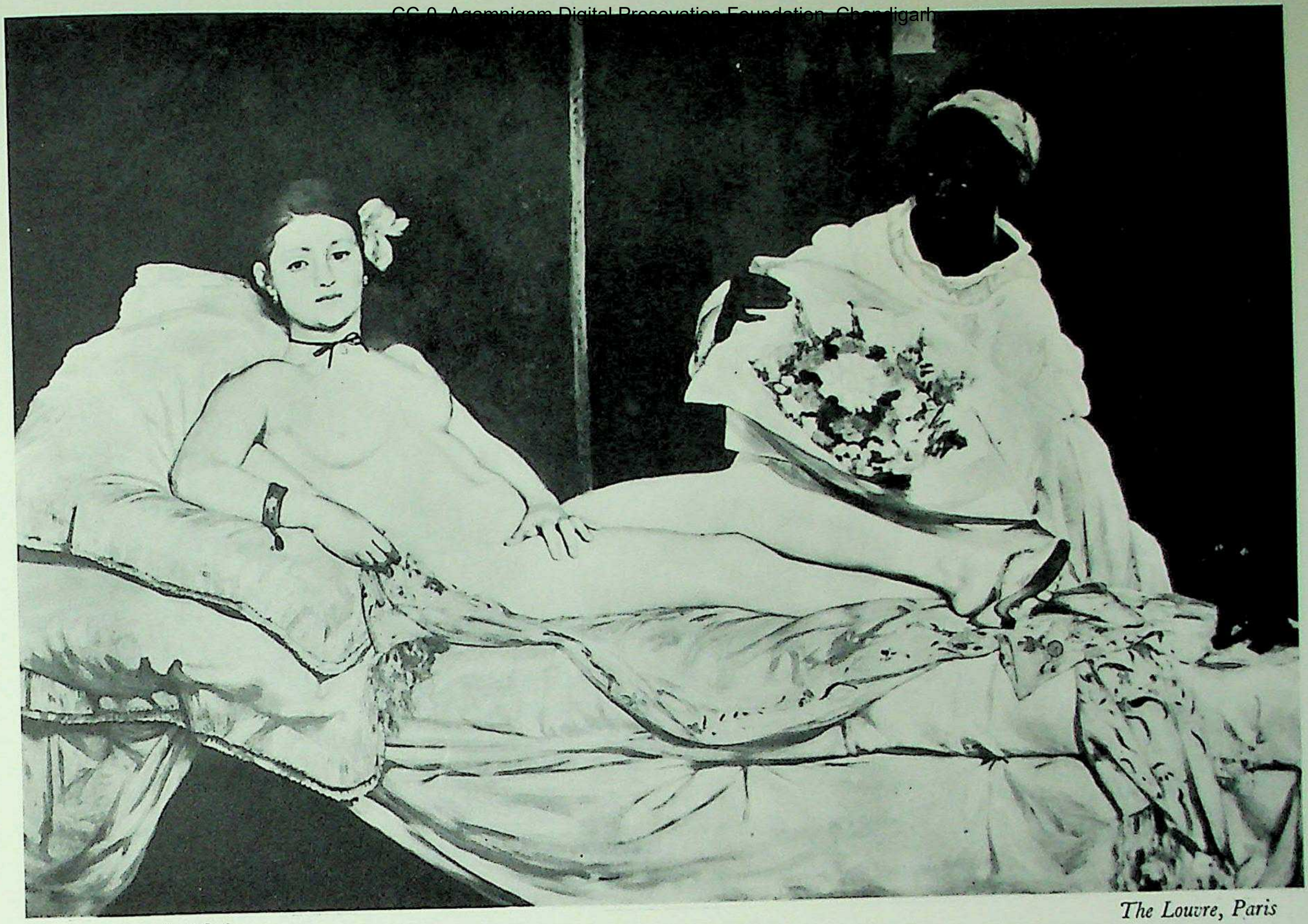

OLYMPIA (1863)

The Louvre, Paris

EDOUARD
MANET

(1832-1883)

TEXT BY S. LANE FAISON

THE SENSE OF DETACHMENT is perhaps the dominant expressive element in Manet's art. His is the considered appraisal, the distant contemplation. Influenced by Goya, by Courbet, and by his own contemporaries, the Impressionists, Manet differs radically from all of them. Not for him was Goya's dark sensuality, or Courbet's blunt force, or Renoir's pagan abandon, or Claude Monet's massive effects, or Pissarro's modest intimacy, or Sisley's aerial charm. He was close to the Impressionist circle, yet he did not exhibit with them. Although the most stylish of all the great painters of the nineteenth century, he did not live to see the public recognize him as one of the most important recorders of the Parisian life of his time. His very detachment was a barrier to recognition.

Of all the artists whom Manet resembles, Edgar Degas, two years his junior, is the closest in time; and Velasquez, though of the seventeenth century, is the closest in impact. Neither Degas nor Manet can be thought of apart from the city of Paris. Both were aristocrats by temperament, though not by birth. Manet's father, a magistrate, and his mother were altogether bourgeois, as his early portrait of them makes abundantly clear.

The detachment that marks both Degas and Manet found its expression in an extreme aesthetic sensibility.

However impressive they may have been as illustrators of the life of their time—and here Degas surpassed Manet—they both insisted on fitting what they saw of the brilliant passing show into a language of pattern, of attenuated shape, of infinitely subtle colour relationships disengaged from a particular moment in time. At heart they were both—to use a modern term—abstract artists. While they responded to the elegant aspects of Parisian life, Manet was almost never caustic, as Degas so often became. Unlike Manet, who accepted charm with enthusiasm, Degas explored the beauty of ugliness. For him the rhythm of the ballet and the rhythm of two women ironing were a similar experience, and in neither case were the protagonists physically attractive. Manet, on the contrary, sought out elegance wherever it could be found, not only in the world of fashion and the demimonde, but even in the naked body of a prostitute. "Olympia" was his title for her, no doubt to suggest that he wished to idealize her, despite his uncompromising projection of her shamelessness. Critics who missed the elegance of Olympia's posture, the beauty of texture and pattern, the sophisticated repeat of minor accents, compared her to a stripped fowl.

Among the examples of Degas' influence on Manet, we may cite the connection between his painting, *The Collector of Prints*, dated 1866, and the *Portrait of Emile Zola* which Manet painted two years later (plate 6). It is clear that Manet borrowed Degas' compositional scheme, especially in the arrangement of the background details. The interpretations differ, however; Manet elevates Degas' homely directness to a plane of social distinction, even though Zola himself hardly provided the occasion for such a metamorphosis. Manet's portrait of his friend Antonin Proust, even more than the Zola portrait, strikes Manet's own pose of the *boulevardier.* As we shall show in the comment on the Zola portrait, such portraits by Manet were to a considerable degree self-portraiture.

A self-portrait done by Manet in 1878 provides evidence for these conclusions, as do several informal pencil portraits which Degas did of him, three of them now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Degas, however, refuses to flatter his friend and eliminates all the glitter. Indeed, he made an etching of Manet which emphasizes a rather fierce expression, something Manet never disclosed in his self-portraits.

Over a period of several years, until he went to Spain in 1865, Manet painted a series of "Spanish" pictures. He attended performances by Spanish dancers in Paris, sought their acquaintance, and made paintings of them, both in groups and individually. *Lola de Valence*, in the Louvre, is the finest. He dressed his brothers, his friends, and his models in Spanish costume, and painted pictures that rival Velasquez in splendour. He imagined bullfights, but with none of Goya's gore. Victorine Meurend, who posed for the *Olympia* and the *Luncheon on the Grass*, masquerades as an *espada* in the arena. In one of his compositions, the figure of a dead toreador stretched out in the foreground had so little connection with the surrounding scene that Manet, yielding for once to the protests of the Salon critics, cut it out as a separate picture. This figure, now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, recalls one by Velasquez which he may have seen at a dealer's in Paris. A part of the upper section of the original picture is now in The Frick Collection, New York.

It is significant that Manet stopped painting "Spanish" pictures after he went to Spain. A Spain which he knew only through literature and the museums and through itinerant dancers could and did become the means of his early detachment from the life around him. Later, when reality broke the spell of romance, he could join his friends, the Impressionists, in their enthusiasm for themes of contemporary life, and yet at the same time maintain that aesthetic distance from his subject which was so essential to his own expression.

It is also significant that Manet chose to emulate Velasquez, among Spanish painters. Velasquez had been rediscovered by Goya after a century or more of neglect, and it was probably Goya's etchings after Velasquez that first drew Manet's attention to him. Original oil paintings by Velasquez were rare in the Paris of Manet's day, but it is a cardinal rule of art history that artists of the same spiritual family manage to discover one another despite the most difficult obstacles. What attracted Manet to Velasquez was the language of texture and of pattern, of subtle tones of grey and black, and the completely impersonal air. What Henri Focillon has said of Manet can also be applied to Velasquez: he saw contemporary life "less with abandon and sympathy than with a kind of cruel charm".

The development of Manet's art over a period of about twenty years, from the early *Luncheon on the Grass* (1863, plate 3), to his last important work, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (on the cover), is studied in some detail in the commentary which follows. If space had permitted, we should have said something of Manet as a painter of history, in which he is not outstanding, and as a painter of flowers and of landscape, in which he is. We should also have considered Manet's constant but unfulfilled desire for recognition by the public at large, which partly explains his refusal to exhibit with the circle of Impressionists and his persistence in submitting paintings to the annual Salon despite the most hostile reception. On one occasion he yielded to the pressure of public taste, and in a spirit of rivalry with Frans Hals, painted *Le Bon Bock*, now in the collection of Carroll S. Tyson, Philadephia.

Typical of Manet's turn of mind was the half-facetious Latin pun which he made on his own name: *Manet et manebit* ("He remains and will remain"). He was a good prophet. His work has lasted well, so well that Paul Jamot could write of him, on the occasion of the great retrospective exhibition in Paris which marked the centennial of his birth: "Manet understood instinctively that art, since it is our surest and even our sole means of conquering death, seeks for permanence. Even when the taste and the preoccupations of the day were influencing painters to analyse what is fugitive and to capture what is evanescent, a great artist was able to transform the ephemeral according to the measure of things which are changeless. To the things of this earth where nothing lasts, he brought the sign of eternity."

Commentary

COVER (PLATE ONE)

A BAR AT THE FOLIES-BERGÈRE (1881)

Courtauld Institute of Art, London. 37¾″ × 50″

It is instructive to compare this serene masterpiece of Manet's last years with the smaller oil sketch (about half as high), in the Boymans Museum, Rotterdam. In the sketch, Manet intended to set down as spontaneously as he could a momentary impression, including its image in a mirror. With quick strokes of a heavily loaded brush he accented the animation of the passing show. Except for the fact that the colour is rather subdued, here is the very essence of the Impressionist point of view.

When Manet came to consider the final composition, he regarded Impressionism as no more than a means to an end: to express himself in formally disciplined and traditionally durable terms, as in his work of the sixties. Observe what liberties he has taken with appearance, how he has rearranged what he *saw* in order to clarify what he *felt*. The result, with its unexpected overtones of architectural sculpture, differs profoundly from the Impressionist ideal.

The girl's position is now strongly fixed in the picture plane and on the vertical axis. She is set apart physically as her pose and the direction of her gaze set her apart psychologically. If there is a "real" man, corresponding to the man in the mirror at the extreme right, the girl is not looking at him, whatever her reflection may tell us to the contrary. Such a man, if he ever existed, stood where we, as spectators, stand. The sudden identification of oneself with an image in a painted mirror is one of the several queer experiences this painting offers.

Is the reflected girl the same person who occupies the centre of the picture? If so, Manet has shifted his own position as spectator, and thereby destroyed for ever the illusion of a single moment in time. This is perhaps the greatest difference between the impact of the sketch and the final work.

As we should expect, the colours of the "real" and the reflected bottles match; but the reflected bottles are on the wrong side of the table. If the reflections in the gold-framed mirror were corrected to correspond with the two "real" bottles, their new position would hopelessly confuse the clean sequence of planes back into the space that Manet has invented. He has consistently relegated the world of illusion to the extremities and to the background. The couple at the right are glassy apparitions, while the figures in the distant balcony, below the great chandelier (itself an image of glass in glass), look far off to the left. From high above them, but still in the mirror, an acrobat dangles green shoes.

PLATE TWO

BOY WITH CHERRIES (about 1858)

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.
(Gulbenkian Collection, Loan.) 25¾″ × 21½″

This is one of Manet's earliest works, done when he was about twenty-five, and shortly after he completed six years of study under Thomas Couture. While it betrays Couture's influence in the carefully graded modelling, notable in the face of the boy, his collar, and the three cherries hanging at the lower left, it is easy to see that Manet is already well launched on his career. The bold scale, the aggressively frontal position of the figure, the insistence on the reds and greens as colour areas with intrinsic appeal, and the perfect placing and diagonal balance of the units of design are all characteristic of Manet's style. Moreover, the model was not a professional, as was required by Couture's studio practice, but Manet's own errand boy, named Alexandre.

The theme of a figure leaning over a wall derives from Dutch art, of which Manet was an ardent student. If the boy were blowing soap bubbles, this work would closely resemble a composition by the eighteenth-century French painter Chardin, who was likewise attracted to Dutch art. In 1867 Manet actually painted the soap-bubble theme, but the picture (also in the Gulbenkian Collection) is not so close as this one to Chardin's arrangement, which may be studied today in versions in New York, Washington, and Kansas City.

PLATE THREE

LUNCHEON ON THE GRASS (1863)

The Louvre, Paris. 84½″ × 106¼″

The attempt to translate the French title of this picture, *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*, into Luncheon on the Grass, or Picnic in the Woods, merely stresses its inappropriateness. Manet called it *Le Bain* (The Bathing Party), but the public conferred the title which has become inseparable from this work. Both titles are almost useless: all bathing is suspended, and no one is concerned about luncheon. The protagonists are caught in a sort of Egyptian fixity. In the foreground, a magnificent blue still life provides the key to the whole composition. In effect, figures and landscape comprise a formal composition more akin to the aims of still-life painting than the subject itself might suggest.

Five years after completing this major work, Manet painted a second *Luncheon* (plate 7), this time set indoors, but that luncheon is no more consumed than the one in the picture opposite. In both, the action is stopped. We respond to the relationship of the parts of the composition, not to any psychological situation.

One of the reasons why Manet can be called a painter's painter is that he often implied a reference to the work of other painters. A public shocked by the combination of nudity and modern dress either missed the allusion to Giorgione's *Pastoral Concert* or refused to translate Renaissance dress and undress into contemporary terms. The composition itself follows closely one in an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael. For Manet these variations on the themes of others meant that his picture, the modernity of which was perfectly evident to all, was safely anchored to tradition.

This *Luncheon*, an early work painted in the same year as the *Olympia*, reflects the influence of Courbet in its strong greens, its blacks set against grey, and its nude figure brightly lighted against a dark background. But it is totally devoid of Courbet's proletarian and physical emphasis. Its appeal is detached, almost cerebral. Study, for example, the relationship between the large triangle made by the four figures and the smaller triangles formed by the arms, legs, and knees of the trio in the foreground.

Victorine Meurend, Manet's favourite model, posed for the nude. Her appearance in other pictures is sometimes unexpected (see *The Fifer Boy*, plate 5). In the *Luncheon*, though Manet's own brother Eugène reputedly posed for the figure beside the nude, there is a strange resemblance between the juxtaposed faces. Did the face of Victorine interpose itself between Manet and his own brother? Manet seems to have discovered his own Gioconda; she appears and reappears, regardless even of age and sex.

PLATE FOUR

MLLE VICTORINE IN THE COSTUME OF AN ESPADA (1863)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 65½″ × 50¾″

This is one of the "Spanish" pictures, painted before Manet went to Spain. It is strongly influenced by the romantic enthusiasm for Spain as an exotic land, prevalent in literary circles. Victor Hugo's *Les Orientales* (1829), *Ruy Blas*, and *Hernani* had established this vogue, while Prosper Mérimée had popularized it in 1846 with *Carmen*, which Bizet was to set to music in 1875.

In every respect this is a synthetic interpretation, utterly removed from Goya's versions of skill and death in the arena. It is "posed" in the most derogatory sense of the word. The figure is unconcerned by the surrounding action. The hands hardly grasp the sword or the large pink cloth, which is neither the red *muleta* (flag) of the bullfighter, nor the cape brandished before the play begins. As in *The Fifer Boy* of 1866 (next plate), Manet has posed Victorine, his favourite model, with little regard for anything but a fine composition. The areas of lemon-yellow, light blue, lavender, and pink (echoed in a pale variation in the stockings), all set next to the black of the costume, brilliantly project the figure forward, while the remaining elements of the scene retreat in their neutral greys and tans. Victorine's shoes provide the necessary transition in colour.

PLATE FIVE

THE FIFER BOY (1866)

The Louvre, Paris. $38\frac{1}{2}'' \times 23\frac{1}{2}''$

The jury which rejected this picture from the Salon of 1866 knew what it was doing. Charges of vulgarity which had greeted the *Luncheon on the Grass* three years before were not inspired entirely by its combination of fully dressed males and a nude female. A more fundamental opposition, especially on the part of the critics, was aroused by Manet's use of flat tones edged by a thin stripe of very dark shadow, instead of the carefully graded procedure taught in art schools for modelling a form from dark to light. Manet's rejection of this process had become particularly clear in *Olympia* (page 1), which, though painted in 1863, had first been exhibited at the Salon of 1865, where it was the scandal of the show.

From this more technical point of view, *The Fifer Boy* was an even greater affront to the public's expectation than the *Olympia* had been. Here the whole figure appears to exist on the picture surface like a poster. Black outlines and sharp edges mark off the colour areas. There is nothing behind the figure, not even a corner in a bare room. On what do the feet cast their shadows?

Except for the colour itself, this is all but a Fauve painting of 1905. In *The Fifer Boy*, and *The Dead Toreador* painted two years earlier, Manet took his most daring adventure into an uncharted future. The modern attack on illusion was already well under way. It has been correctly said that the Cubists' use of *collage*—that is, pasting strips of newsprint or coloured papers on the canvas—is simply an extension of Manet's pictorial revolution.

The emphasis on flatness, cited above, is perhaps exaggerated, though it corresponds to the actual reception accorded this picture by the critics of Manet's day. A remarkable aspect of *The Fifer Boy* is the degree to which the figure exists in space without benefit of the methods of modelling usually practised by the Academy. The variation in width of the black stripe on the red trousers subtly but powerfully marks changes in its position in space; the dark accent of projecting shoes and the slight pool of shadow affirm this salience of relief.

PLATE SIX

PORTRAIT OF EMILE ZOLA (1868)

The Louvre, Paris (Bequest of Mme Zola). $57\frac{1}{4}'' \times 43\frac{1}{4}''$

Manet painted this portrait out of gratitude for the support Zola had given him in critical reviews. The objects in the picture refer, therefore, to interests which the two men shared. Japanese art, echoed in the screen to the left and the print of an actor to the right, had quickly come into fashion following the 1867 World's Fair in Paris. Velasquez' leadership in steadfast observation of humble people, here represented by a print of *Los Borachos* (behind the Japanese actor), was strikingly prophetic of the naturalistic movement, to which Zola had welcomed Manet. The print itself is almost certainly the etching which Goya made of Velasquez' painting. Goya was a second force behind the "Spanish" pictures which Manet painted in the early 1860's—before he went to Spain. The name of Manet on the light blue book identifies it as a copy of Zola's essays on him, which had just been republished in a single volume. In them, Zola specifically defended *Olympia*, which appears just above the book in the proxy of a sepia photograph.

Comparison of this portrait of Zola with many existing records of Zola's appearance leads to the surprising conclusion that it is more of a self-portrait than a resemblance to Manet's friend and champion. Zola was often called "The Bear"; and the bust by Philippe Solari, modelled about this time, shows him with a kind of lion's mane and the chest of an athlete: the open-shirted virility of a Second Empire Ernest Hemingway.

It used to be supposed that Manet painted this portrait in Zola's home, but John Rewald has published a letter from Zola which states that "Manet is doing my portrait for the Salon and I am spending every afternoon in his studio". The point is a minor one, but it serves to reduce further the documentary value of this picture. At the same time its value is emphasized as a self-revelation and a pictorial invention.

PLATE SEVEN

LUNCHEON IN THE STUDIO (1868)

Bavarian State Painting Collections, Munich. $47\frac{1}{4}'' \times 69''$

Painted in the same year as the portrait of Zola, this composition achieves a larger sense of scale, although its actual area is not much greater. The life-size figure of the boy, cut at the knees, looms almost as strikingly as the barmaid in the Folies-Bergère picture (on the cover). His rich, plum coat, so dark that at first it seems black, projects from the slate greys and white of the background. Its velvet sheen is framed between textures: glass, porcelain, and metal on the left; oysters, china glass, and the oily surface of a lemon on the right. These are arranged in depth, unlike the books and the pictures on the wall in the Zola portrait. An alcove of space is thus formed for the main figure, which is further sharpened by outline and by crisp pockets of cast shadow. Note how the straw hat, the necktie, and the trousers correspond in colour and in salience. The faintly marked lapels, however, subtly lace this figure into a series of crossing diagonals into which fit the lemon, the table knife, and the arms of the man and woman.

The boy stands off-centre. Accordingly, Manet makes the diagonals of the cramped right side of the picture more angular and active. On the left, they swing more gently, and the great sword bends in harmony, with the soft curve of the woman's forearm. Its shape is echoed, too, by the leaves of the big plant. By such means, and by the deep, ruddy mass of the upholstered chair, Manet restores the equilibrium initially upset by the placing of the boy.

Despite his fixed and distant stare, the boy is full of life. The apparent flatness turns out to be a deception. One knee is clearly in front of the other, and the creases in the trousers introduce a tension diagonally to the right, via the shadow cast by the hand. But the base of the coat swings gently around to the left, its action caught up immediately by the woman's arm. Between her head and the boy's there is an almost symmetrical shape, and the faces are similar in their colour and position. Thus a harmonic relationship is established between them.

On the right side of the picture, Manet has elaborated a favourite colour contrast: clear, pale blue (china) and leaden olive (oysters).

People sometimes complain that nothing is happening in many Manets. These are the best ones.

PLATE EIGHT

THE BALCONY (1869)

The Louvre, Paris. $67\frac{3}{4}'' \times 49\frac{1}{4}''$

Although this painting was inspired by a composition of Goya, *Majas on a Balcony* (a version of which is in The Metropolitan Museum of Art), nothing could better clarify Manet's procedure than a comparison of the two paintings. Where Goya is murky and sinister, Manet is urbane and elegant. Where Goya strikes a fundamental sexual contrast, Manet contrives a formal pictorial arrangement out of a group of friends taking the air.

The brunette with the penetrating gaze is Berthe Morisot, who later became Manet's sister-in-law. Her natural distinction as a person and her subtlety as a painter both drew Manet's profound admiration. Behind her is the painter Antoine Guillemet, a minor figure in the Impressionist movement. To the right is Jenny Claus, a violinist.

Manet's image of Berthe Morisot has no hint of the sensuality of

Goya. Instead, he has conjured up a vision of diaphanous charm *à la* Gainsborough, but unlike Gainsborough he has strengthened it with the force of an abstract structure. What is the function of the balcony in this painting? In Goya's picture it fences in the human passions, and it is properly dark. Here, it establishes the prevailing tones of green and sets up expectations of a formal organization in narrow rectangles and acute triangles. Note, for example, the colour and shape of the parasol and its tassels. Note the fan held by Berthe Morisot, the position of her right arm, and the angular dark areas flanking Jenny Claus. All these are framed by the green blinds, which are crossed in turn by a descending series of narrow slats. The variation in value and texture of these small green rectangles rivals the best passages in Velasquez.

The diagonal crossbars of the balcony intersect at four green medallions. The repeated emphasis on this shape suggests that it has a significance in the composition beyond its function as mere illustration. Interesting echoes—the hat of Jenny Claus, several dim forms in the background, the brown and white ball at the bottom edge of the picture—indicate that the medallion is a secondary motive in this composition, contrasting in mood to the major triangles and rectangles, much as the themes of a sonata are separately announced and then intricately interwoven in the development.

There are secondary colour themes as well, kept subordinate to the pervasive green. The brown and white ball, mentioned above in another connection, leads to the dog, the settee, the fan, the brown shadows cast on flesh, and the background. The bluish tone of the hydrangea and its pot is echoed directly in Guillemet's cravat, and indirectly through the translucent white dresses.

PLATE NINE

ON THE BEACH (1873)

Collection Mme Jacques Doucet, Paris. 20½″×28⅜″

"And suddenly blue, purple, and green flushed the sea; left it grey; struck a stripe which vanished; but when Jacob had got his shirt over his head the whole floor of the waves was blue and white, rippling and crisp, though now and again a broad purple mark appeared, like a bruise; or there floated an entire emerald tinged with yellow."

Exactly fifty years separate Manet's painting and this description of the sea in *Jacob's Room* by Virginia Woolf. One might say that the writer, steeped in the beauty of Impressionist pictures, has matched their iridescence. Painted in the summer of 1873 at Berck, on the Channel below Boulogne-sur-Mer, *On the Beach* is one of Manet's early masterpieces in outdoor Impressionism. Degas and Claude Monet had already designed somewhat similar compositions, but they isolated the figures more sharply in the front plane, with the background a mere suggestion of locale. In Manet, however, the motion, the colour, and even the distance of the ocean is suggested in the foreground. The woman (Mme Manet) leads us inward to the man (Manet's brother Eugène), whose thoughts send us scudding across the sand and out to sea.

PLATE TEN

THE CROQUET MATCH (1873)

Staedelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt-am-Main
28⅜″×41¾″

The development of Manet's art can be profitably studied by comparing this picture with the *Luncheon on the Grass* (plate 3), painted ten years earlier. In the 1860's Manet was primarily a painter of figure compositions, and of all the important early works the *Luncheon* was his closest approach to landscape. Nevertheless, it is clearly a studio arrangement, that is, an indoor picture with landscape accompaniment. The insistence on flat areas of colour, the intensity of which is enhanced by contrast to the emphatic greys, blacks, and whites, results in a strong accent on the foreground planes. In addition, the figures are set predominantly across the surface of the canvas rather than diagonally into depth.

Under the growing influence of Manet's association with the Impressionists, *The Croquet Match* extends the pull back into space, decreases the scale of the figures, breaks up the areas of colour and infiltrates the whole picture with movement and light. Another change appears in the use of green: rich and strong like Courbet's in the *Luncheon*, tender and muted according to Manet's own delicate sensibility in this later work. In his last decade, however, Manet continued to prefer figure compositions; thus *The Croquet Match* stands as one of his most Impressionist works.

PLATE ELEVEN

BOATING AT ARGENTEUIL (1874)

Museum of Fine Arts, Tournai, Belgium. 48⅝″×51⅝″

In the summer of 1874, Monet, Renoir, and Manet were all at Argenteuil, on the Seine near Paris. Here they painted several portraits of each other with their families and friends. One of the most interesting is Manet's picture of Claude Monet and his wife in the barque which Monet used as a summer studio; and since light on water is an essential theme of Impressionism, no matter what the actual subject may be, this documentation of Monet's practice is especially precious.

The year 1874 also marked the first group show of the circle which from that time came to be known as the Impressionists. We must remember that Manet refused to exhibit with this group although he was allied to them by many interests and by the ties of intimate friendship. From about 1874 Manet's paintings become more and more marked by the broken colour and the bright palette of the work of his associates. Outdoor themes, unusual in his early work, become much more common, and the attitude is gayer and more carefree. While the later works of Manet may properly be termed Impressionist, he by no means abandoned the traditional claims of pictorial design for effects of poetic evanescence. Nowhere is this better seen than in his boating scenes, of which this is one of the finest.

Everything is in apparent flux: touches of the brush deposit little glints of light on multiple surfaces. On further observation, however, a formidable structure begins to emerge. The big "L" of mast and parapet frames a lesser one, which is defined by the vertical axis of the woman, primly straight, and by the line of the man's arm and the folded umbrella he holds. A small but powerful echo of the "L" motive, inverted, terminates the composition at the lower right. Fainter echoes appear in the background.

On the left there is a descending chain of curves, beginning in the woman's hat. At the centre this is crossed horizontally by an arabesque of four similar curves, and thus another major "L" is implied. On the right side of the picture, thirty-degree angles predominate. These are seen in several variations on the boat at the edge of the composition, in the position of the man's legs, and in the diagonal line of shadow across his chest as it intersects with the inner contours of his arms. There are enough cross references—curves in the right (male) half, angles in the left—to tie the two halves together. Finally, we may mention another "L", formed by the boom of the sailboat and placed on the diagonal into depth. It is the chief means of connection between the foreground and the background of this composition.

PLATE TWELVE

BOATING AT ARGENTEUIL (1874)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 38¼″×51¼″

This painting should be considered with the Tournai picture of the same title (plate 11) which Manet composed during the same summer and from similar elements.

In both, there is a gradual increase in tempo from left to right, from a quiet play of curves on the female side to an interlace of angles in the arms and legs of the man, and finally to an active crisscross of rope and boom. Both compositions contain large-scale formal elements which extend their meaning beyond the mere charm of a summer incident to some monumental order. In the Tournai picture, a big "L" is described at the left by the mast and the bulkhead, and this is reinforced at once by the position of the primly seated lady and by the strong horizontal of the umbrella and the man's left arm. In the

Metropolitan picture, the composition builds up from a smaller "L" shape formed by the lady (who nevertheless challenges Renoir's most glamorous women) to a pyramid compressed into the forward planes by the curve of the boat itself. The play of grey against blue, now broad, now subtly dappled, rises to the man's straw hat, the band of which offers an infinitely sensitive variant of the tone of the water behind.

PLATE THIRTEEN

NANA (1877)

Kunsthalle, Hamburg. 60⅝″×45¼″

It would be tempting to pair this work with Manet's portrait of Zola (plate 6), painted nine years earlier, and so link it to Zola's great novel of the same name. The painting, however, preceded the novel by two years. We must be content with the suggestion of Tabarant, one of Manet's biographers, that such names as Nana and Nini were often adopted by such girls as the one here portrayed.

Actually, the Nanas of Zola and Manet could hardly be further apart. We have already seen that the portrait of Zola has less to do with Zola than with Manet himself. The same distinction between physical force and suave urbanity occurs in the two Nanas. Zola's is a very concrete symbol of lust. Manet's *cocotte*, though unusually bouncy among his females, is caught in a web of rococo interlace. If she cannot quite match the elegant stance of the heron on the Japanese screen behind her, mocking her so artfully, she is eminently satisfactory for the dressy *boulevardier* at the right. The elegance of this painting lies less in the personality of Nana than in Manet's own touch. The surfaces sparkle and gleam, the blacks are all but transparent. The brush has dragged the paint over the canvas with consummate delicacy.

The two main themes of this composition are the oval mirror and the gentleman's top hat—both sharply outlined and very telling because of their place near the picture's edges. Lilting curve on the woman's side, hard right angle on the man's, played one against the other at each extremity, fuse at the centre in the figure of Nana herself. For every thrust of her abdomen, back, and shoulder there is a corresponding rectangular motive: the elbow, the arm crossed by a bracelet, the upright little finger against the horizontal line of three knuckles, the sharp vertical of nose against lip. A long and important horizontal connects the man's gaze with Nana (he is not really looking at her) and with the bottom of the oval mirror. The point of intersection is a candlestick—a miniature repeat of the shape of the top hat.

Thoré, one of many critics who were successful in damaging Manet's reputation during his lifetime, once wrote that Manet's "real vice is a sort of pantheism which values a head no more than a slipper". We may invert this phrase to hail Manet for making a slipper or a candlestick as provocative as a head.

PLATE FOURTEEN

AT THE CAFÉ (1878)

Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore. 18⅝″×15⅜″

Among all the later works of Manet, this small picture is the finest of those which can be called, in the strictest sense of the term, Impressionist. Here, even Renoir is matched, if not surpassed, in vivaciousness, in luminosity, in civilized hedonism. The glasses of beer (more delicious than what passes for beer in French cafés) are concentrates of Impressionist sensibility to light refracted in glass and in liquid. Their flashing tan shades, echoed frequently in this painting, set the greater tonal contrast for the all-important blues, which are clearer and cooler than perhaps ever before in Manet's long experience with them.

At the Café is surely one of Manet's most spontaneous creations. It has all of the virtues and few of the defects of such production. Even here, Manet's insistence on two-dimensional design makes itself felt: in the system of diagonals and triangles in the gentleman's hat, nose, collar, neckline, and fingers, and in the modelling of his cheek. Though the picture space is crowded, the sequence of planes is clear enough, with the interstices of forward plane filled by persons further back.

Part of the verve of this picture is due to its position slightly on the diagonal into depth. Contrast to it the relatively solemn impact of the *Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (on the cover), with its strong insistence on frontal impression. Note how the hand of the man (a nineteenth-century detail out of Van Dyck) balances the beer glass at the left, yet is set somewhat further back in space in accordance with the diagonal line of the table. These two motives both strongly emphasized, are further connected by a continuous curve which starts at the handle of the glass of beer, swings down and forward, and then right and across to the far side of the man's hand. It is the same curve that forms the upper part of the girl who stands behind the main figures.

PLATE FIFTEEN

PORTRAIT OF IRMA BRUNNER (about 1882)

The Louvre, Paris. Pastel, 21¼″×17¾″

In the background of the *Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (on the cover), a woman leaning on the balcony railing has turned her head so that the profile is silhouetted against a circular black hat. The portrait of Irma Brunner is, so to speak, a development of this small detail. Both resemble a finely designed coin.

The *Bar* was Manet's last important work, and this portrait was one of the last of his lesser works. Into it he breathed every subtlety he knew of texture, veiled nuance, and dashing rhythm. The chalk dust of pastel becomes all but moist at the bright lips, where the pale reds of the dress, the flesh tones, and the background are suddenly and vibrantly concentrated. The black hat, lustrous as oil, begins just above the point where the lips end, and just where a continuation of contrast is required. Like certain hats in portraits by Frans Hals, it catches up the circular rhythms of a face, and it deftly describes, in larger scale, a containing arc.

The hat is a dark foil for a pale jewel. The full curves cascade down Irma's mouth, chin, and bosom, but the disc of the hat holds them in almost heraldic fixity. Manet's signature, in the same black, provides a needed connection between top and bottom.

If it is possible to compound Fragonard's freshness with the nobility of profile of an ancient Greek coin, Manet has surely contrived to do it here.

PLATE SIXTEEN

WHITE LILACS AND ROSES (1883)

Paul Rosenberg Gallery, New York. 22″×18″

Just to right of centre in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (on the cover) a glass vase containing two roses stands on a grey marble counter before the rich dark blue of the girl's dress. *White Lilacs and Roses*, which Manet painted about two years later, is an enlarged development of this detail, just as the *Portrait of Irma Brunner* derives from the detail of one of the spectators at the upper left of the same composition. Many of Manet's larger works contain still-life arrangements, often in the lower left-hand corner, as in *Boy with Cherries*, *Luncheon on the Grass*, and *Luncheon in the Studio*. Generally speaking, these are intrinsically satisfying as balanced, interlocked organizations.

The present painting is strikingly cross-shaped, but the potential rigidity of such an arrangement is broken up by an inner diagonal cross, with the three fat roses set athwart a long diagonal of greens. The real vitality of the picture, however, comes from the brushwork. Here, on a small scale, is one of Manet's most brilliant late works, but like the *Bar*, it recalls the dark opulence of *Olympia* and the *Portrait of Zola*.

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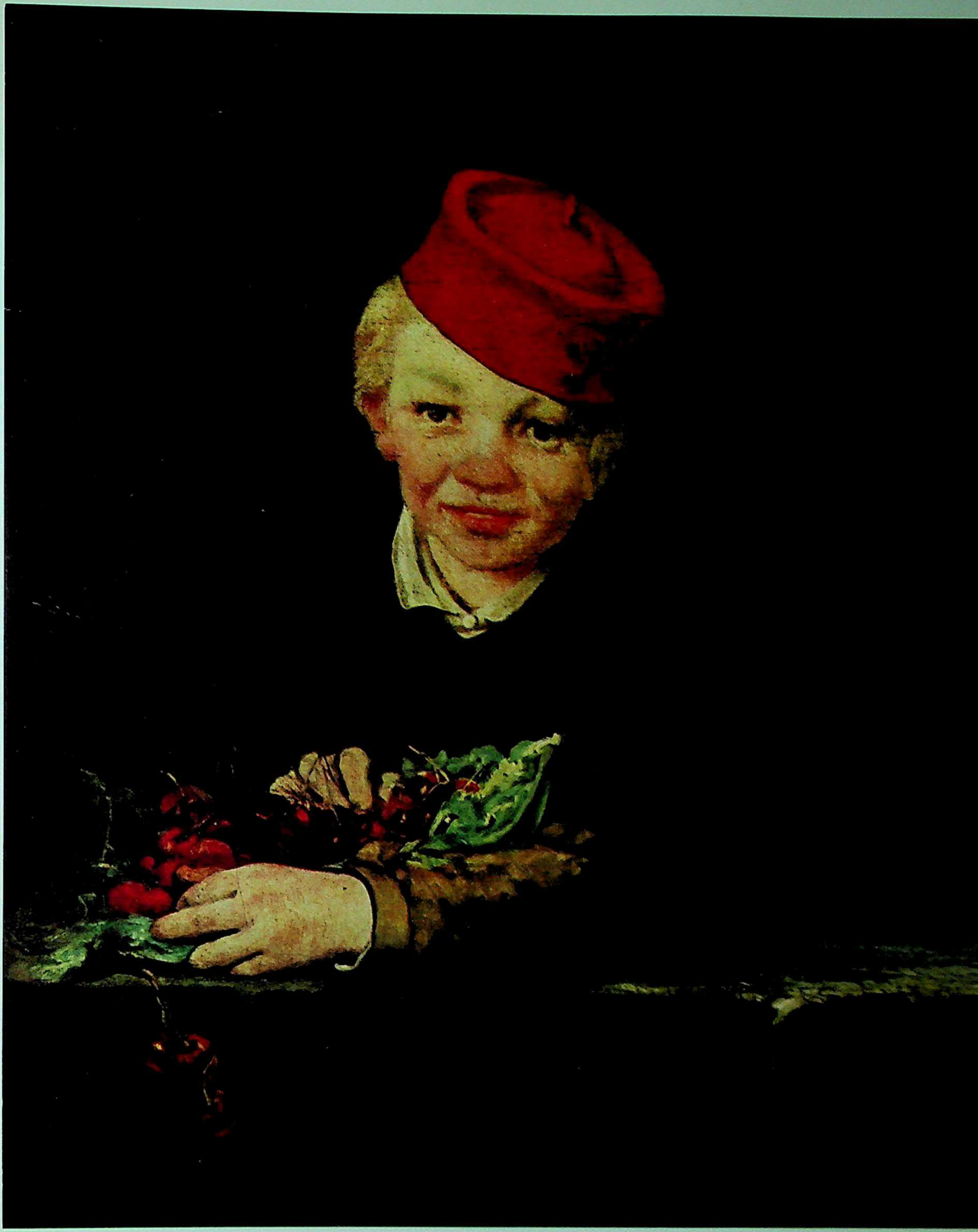

PLATE TWO

BOY WITH CHERRIES (about 1858)
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.
(Gulbenkian Collection, Loan.) $25\frac{3}{4}'' \times 21\frac{1}{2}''$

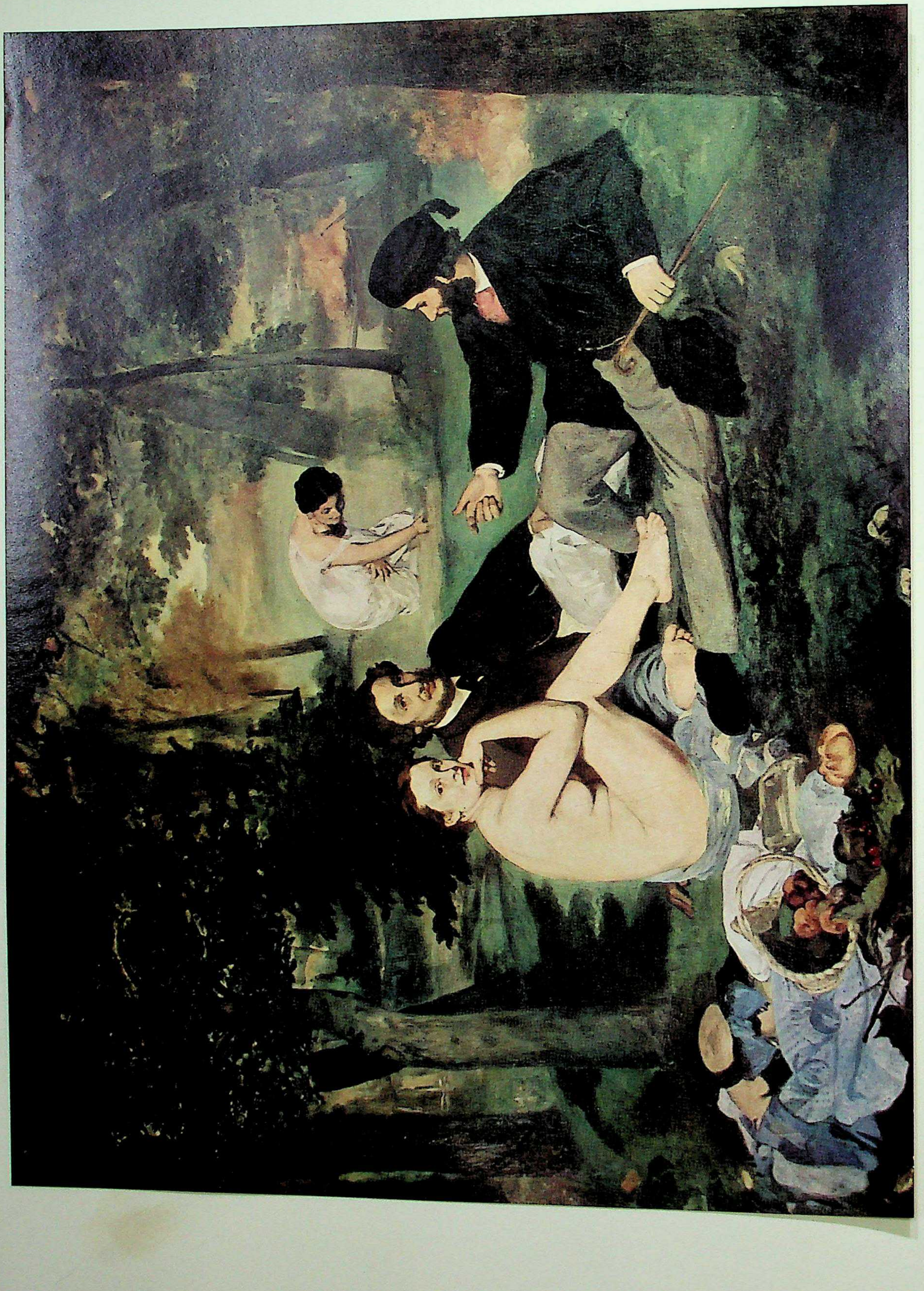

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PLATE THREE

LUNCHEON ON THE GRASS (1863)

The Louvre, Paris. 84½″ × 106¼″

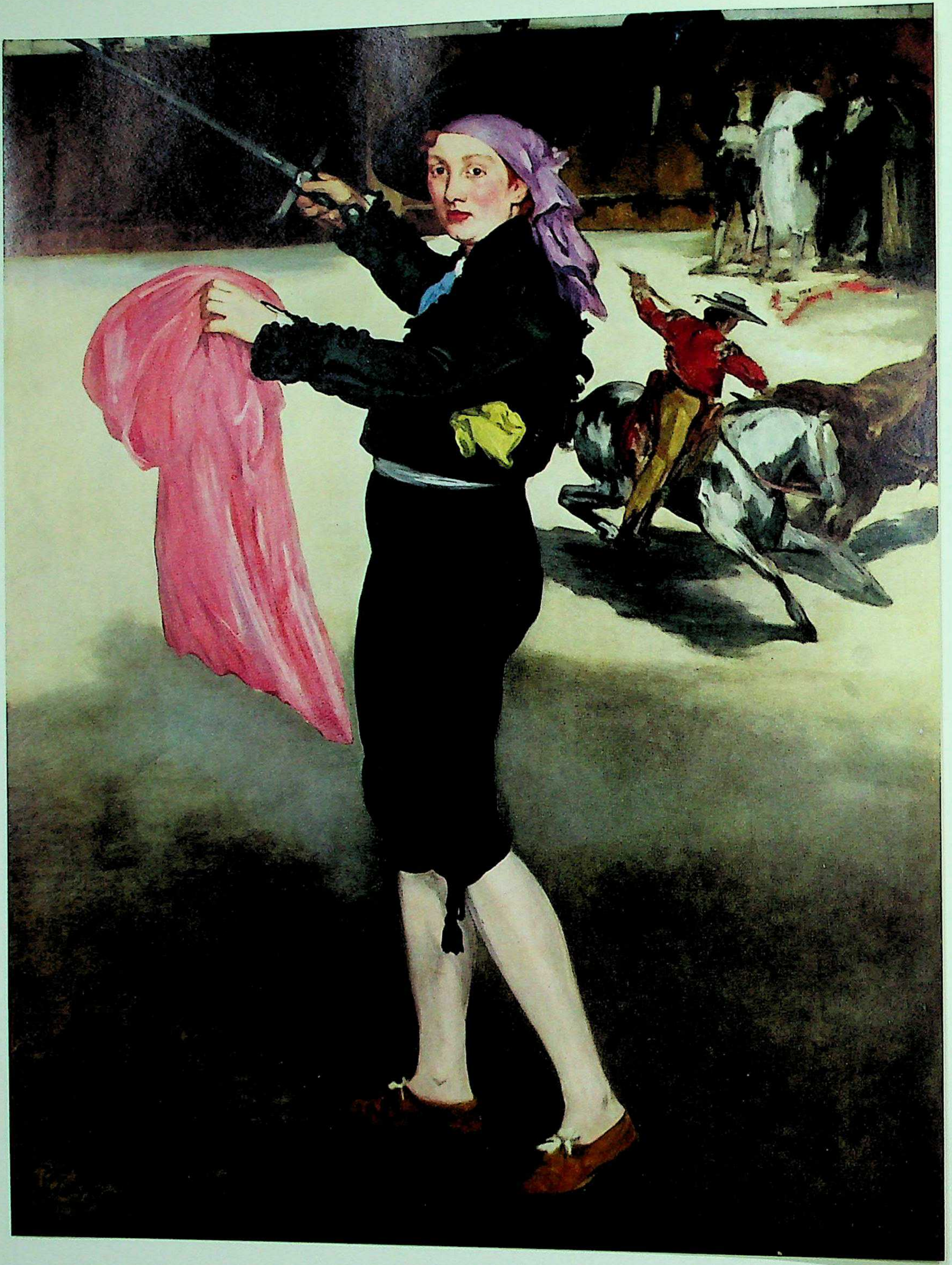

PLATE FOUR

MLLE VICTORINE IN THE COSTUME
OF AN ESPADA (1863)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 65½″ × 50¾″

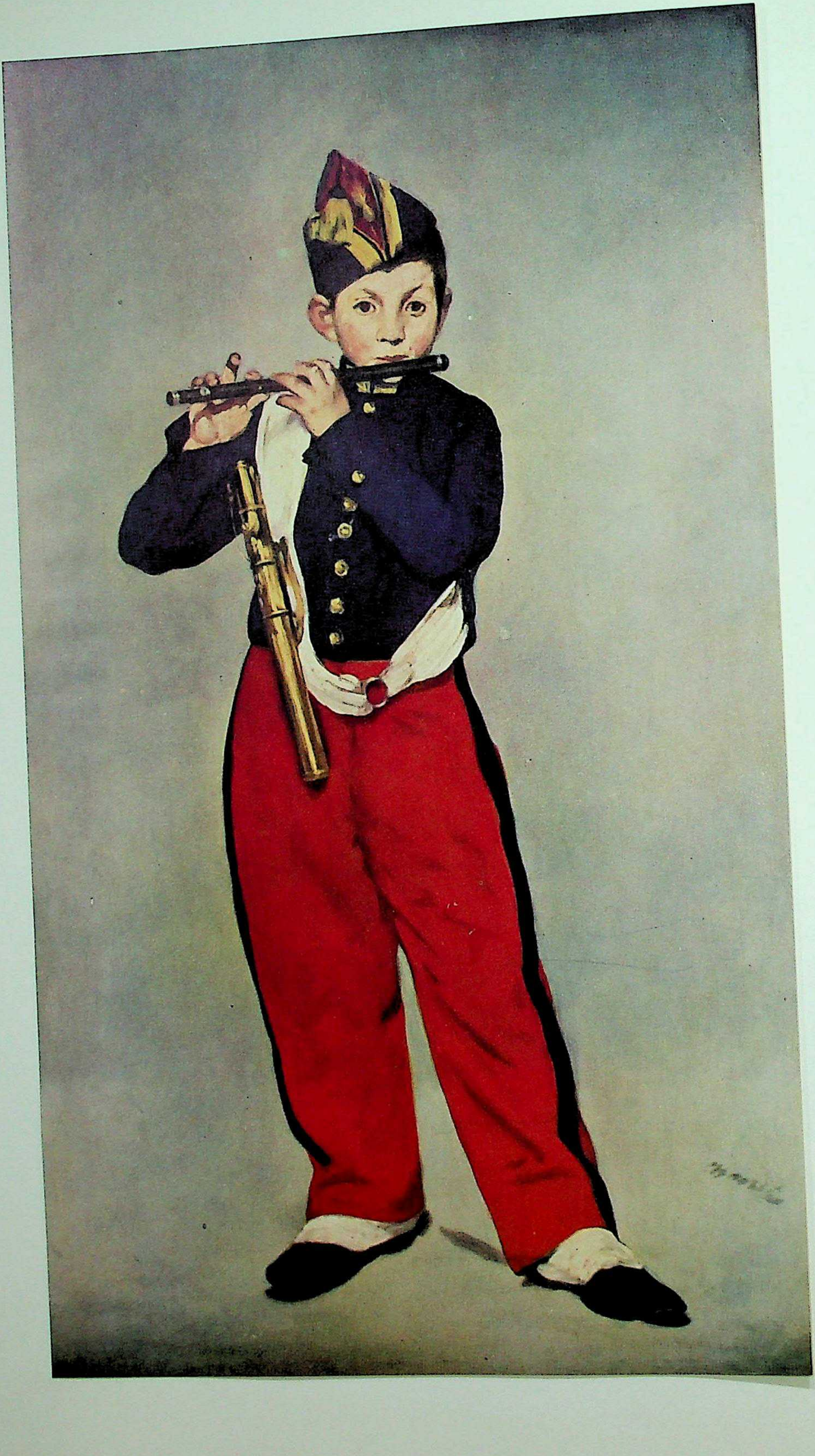

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PLATE FIVE

THE FIFER BOY (1866)

The Louvre, Paris. 38½″ × 23½″

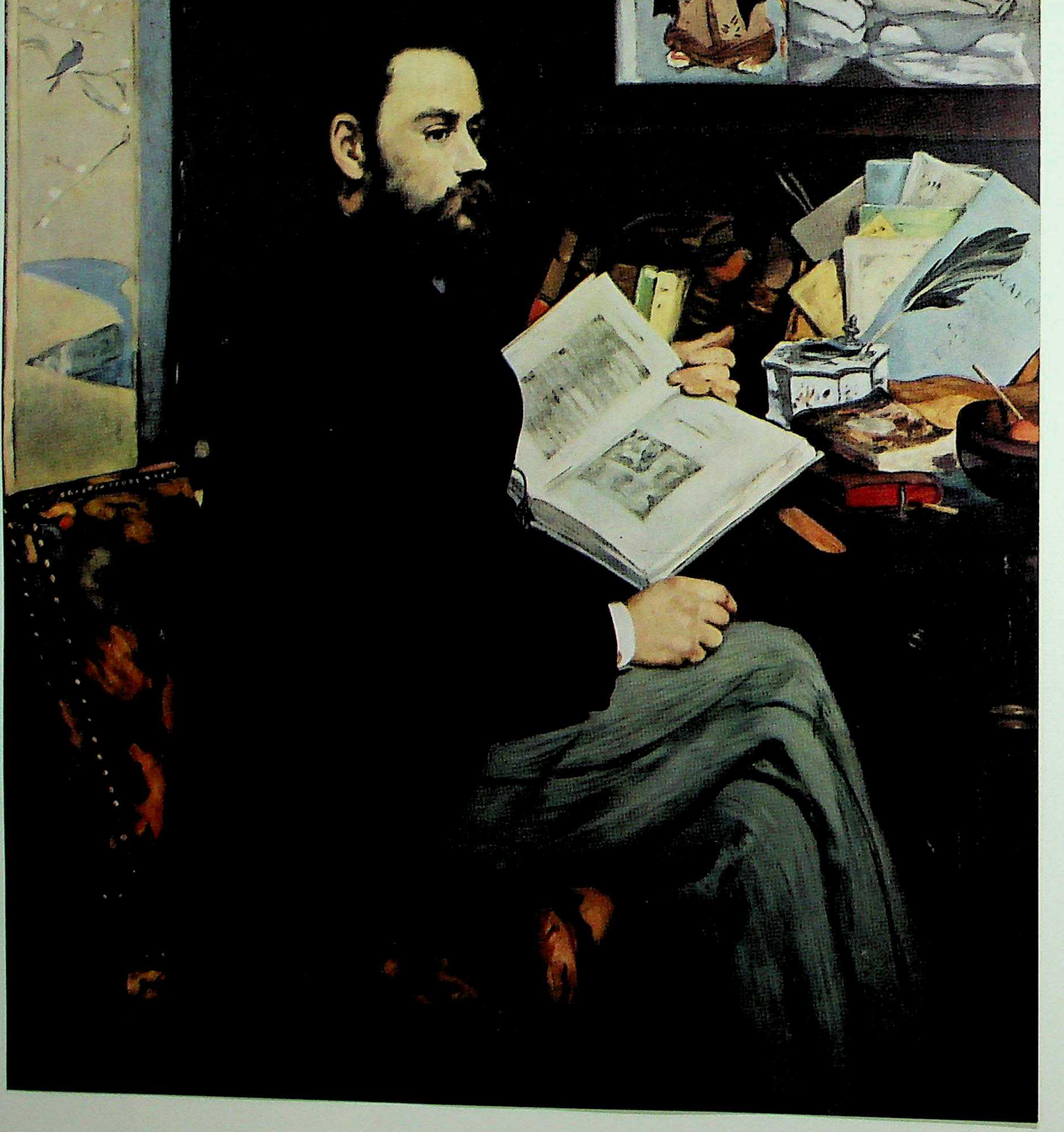

PLATE SIX

PORTRAIT OF EMILE ZOLA (1868)

The Louvre, Paris (Bequest of Mme Zola). 57¼″ × 43¼″

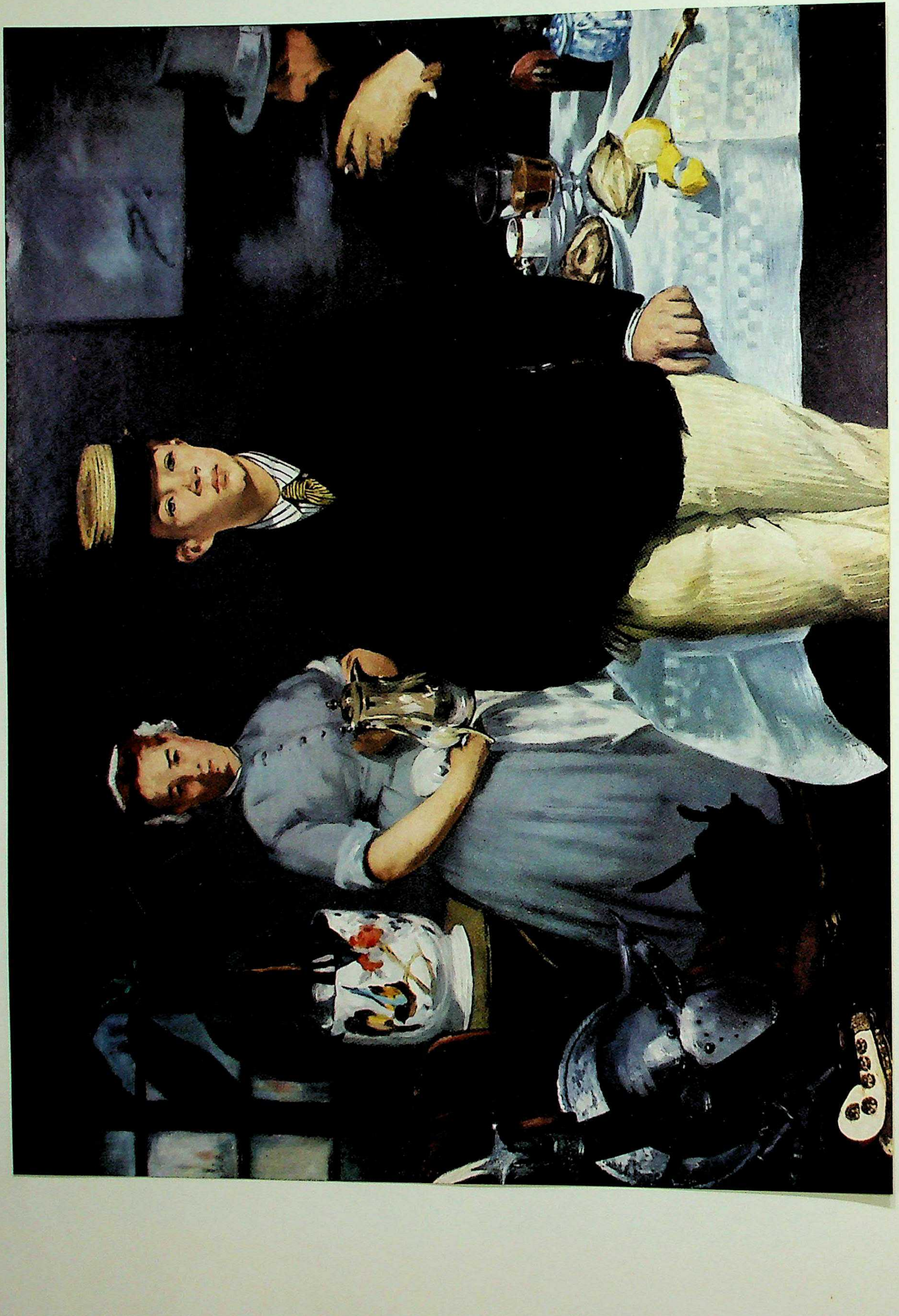

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PLATE SEVEN

LUNCHEON IN THE STUDIO (1868)

Bavarian State Painting Collections, Munich. 47¼" × 69"

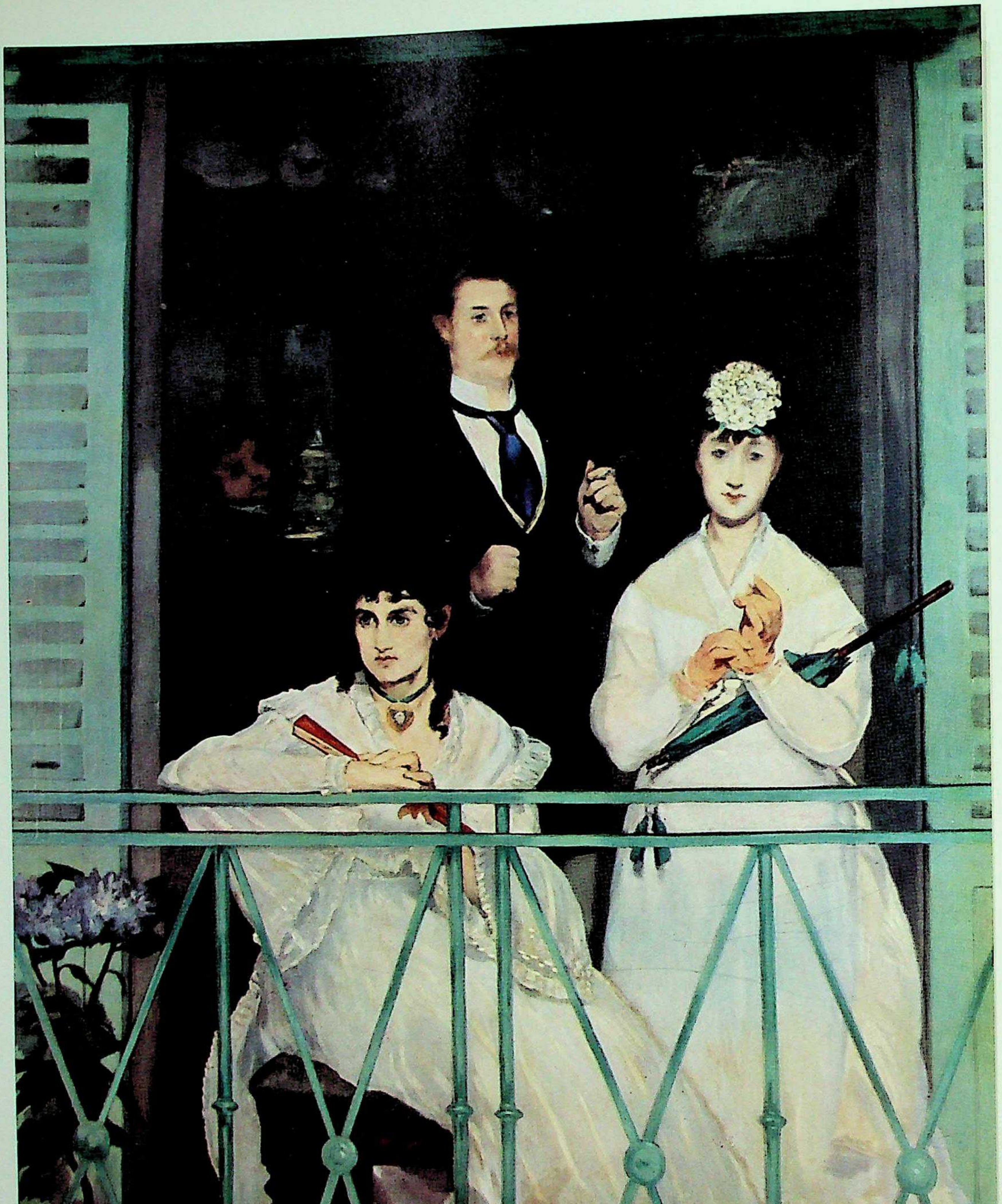

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PLATE EIGHT

THE BALCONY (1869)

The Louvre, Paris. 67¾" × 49¼"

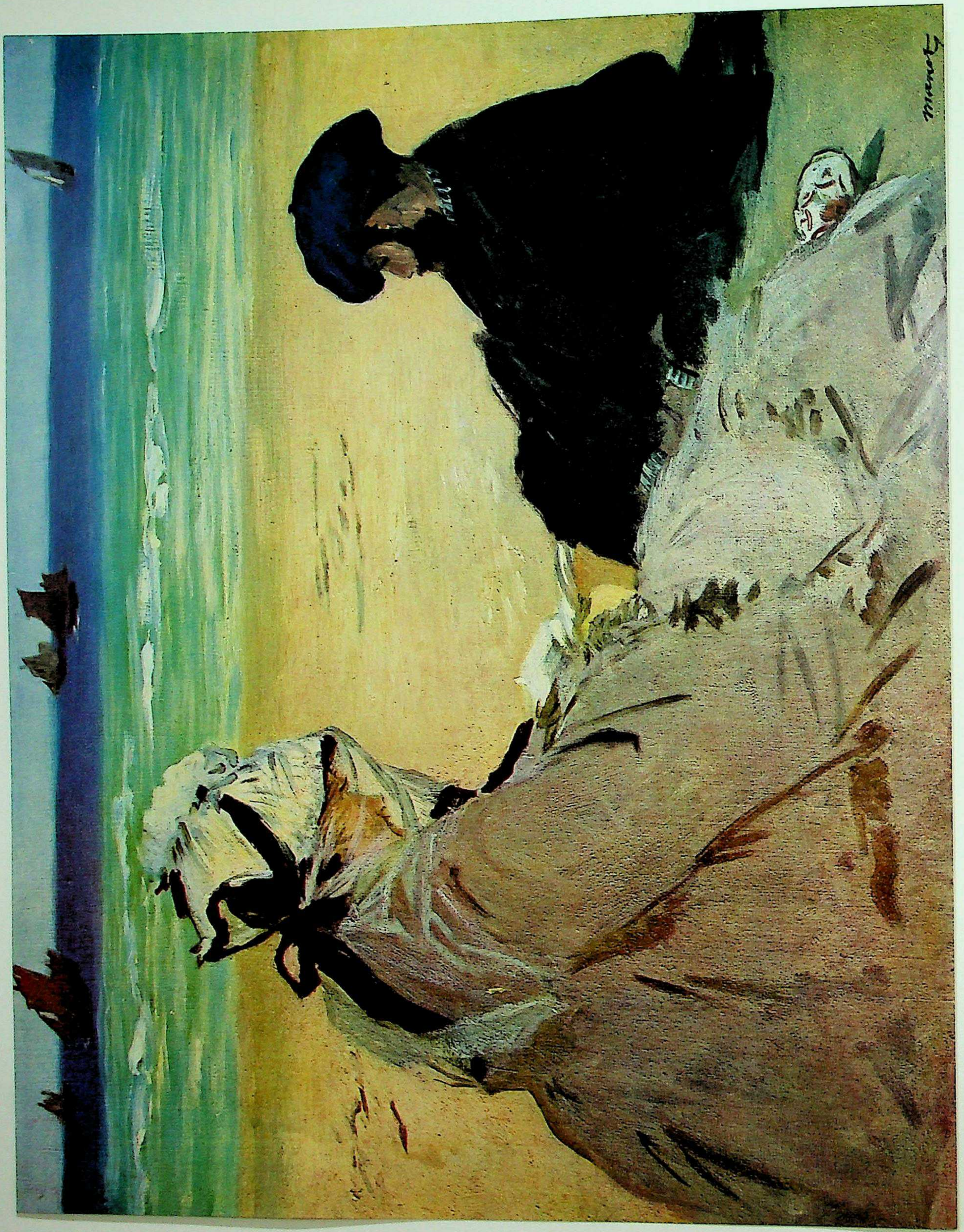
Manet

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PLATE NINE

ON THE BEACH (1873)

Collection Mme Jacques Doucet, Paris. 20½″ × 28⅜″

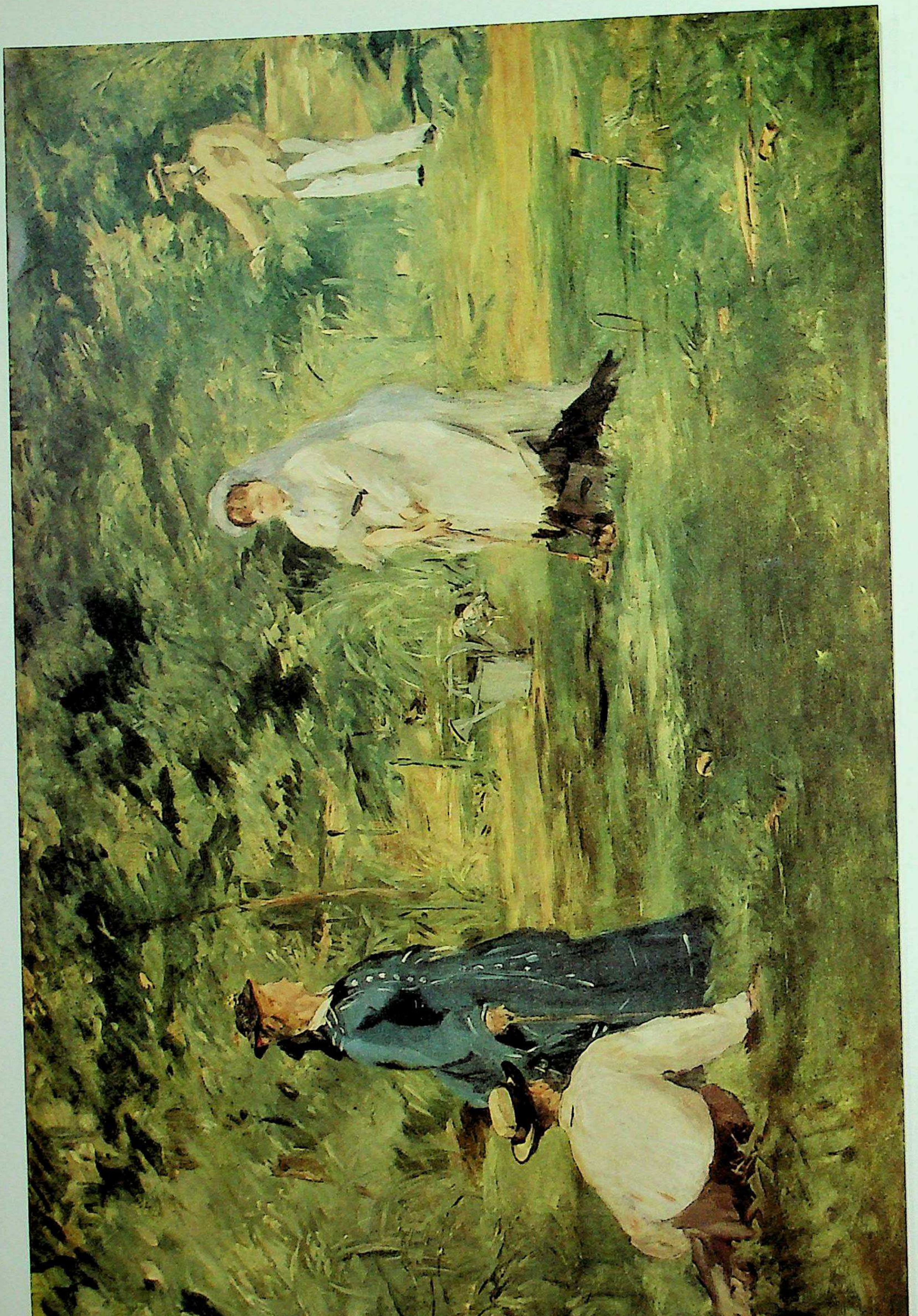

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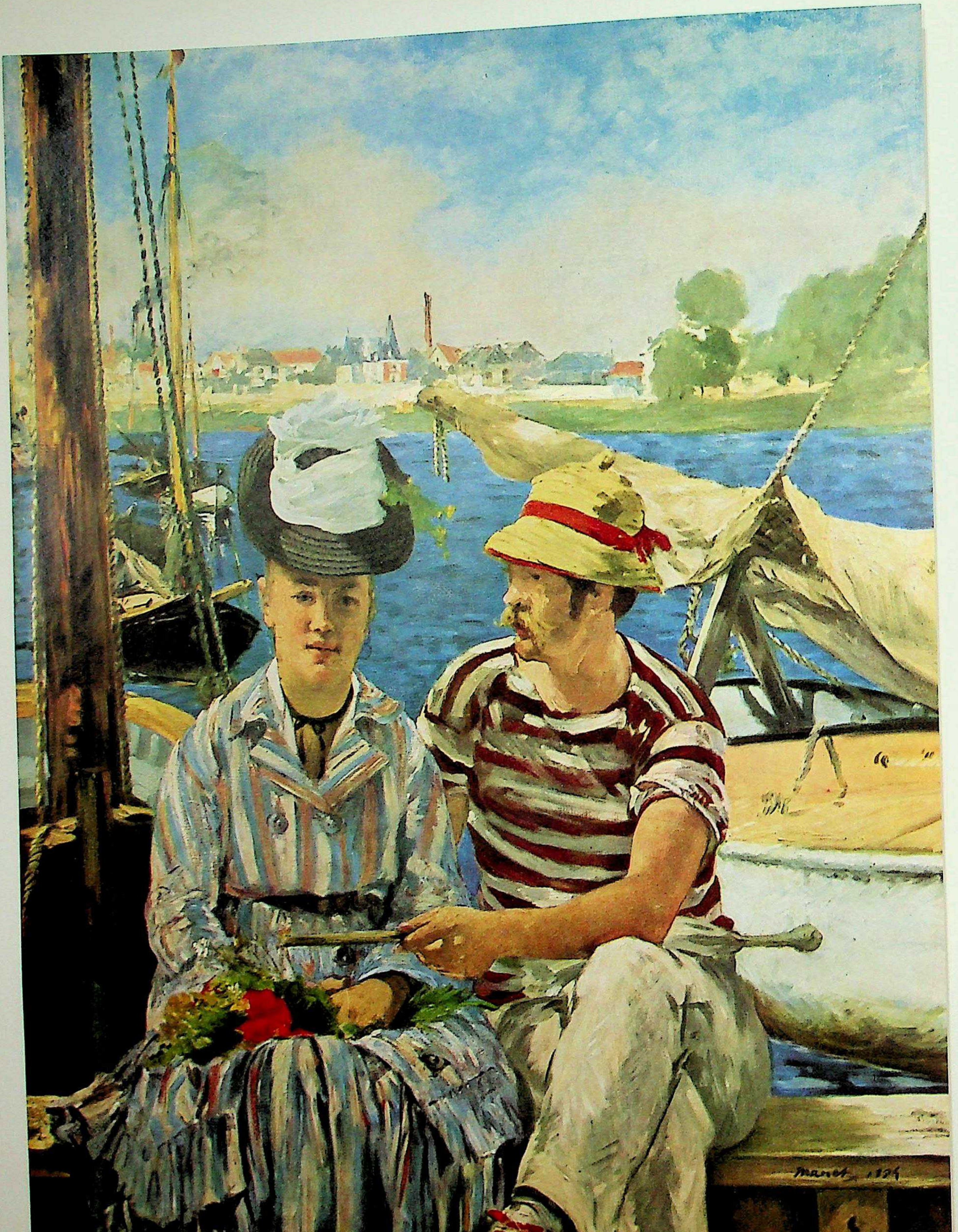
PLATE TEN
THE CROQUET MATCH (1873)
Staedelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt-am-Main
$28\frac{3}{8}'' \times 41\frac{3}{4}''$



Manet 1874

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PLATE ELEVEN

BOATING AT ARGENTEUIL (1874)

Museum of Fine Arts, Tournai, Belgium. 48⅝" × 51⅝"

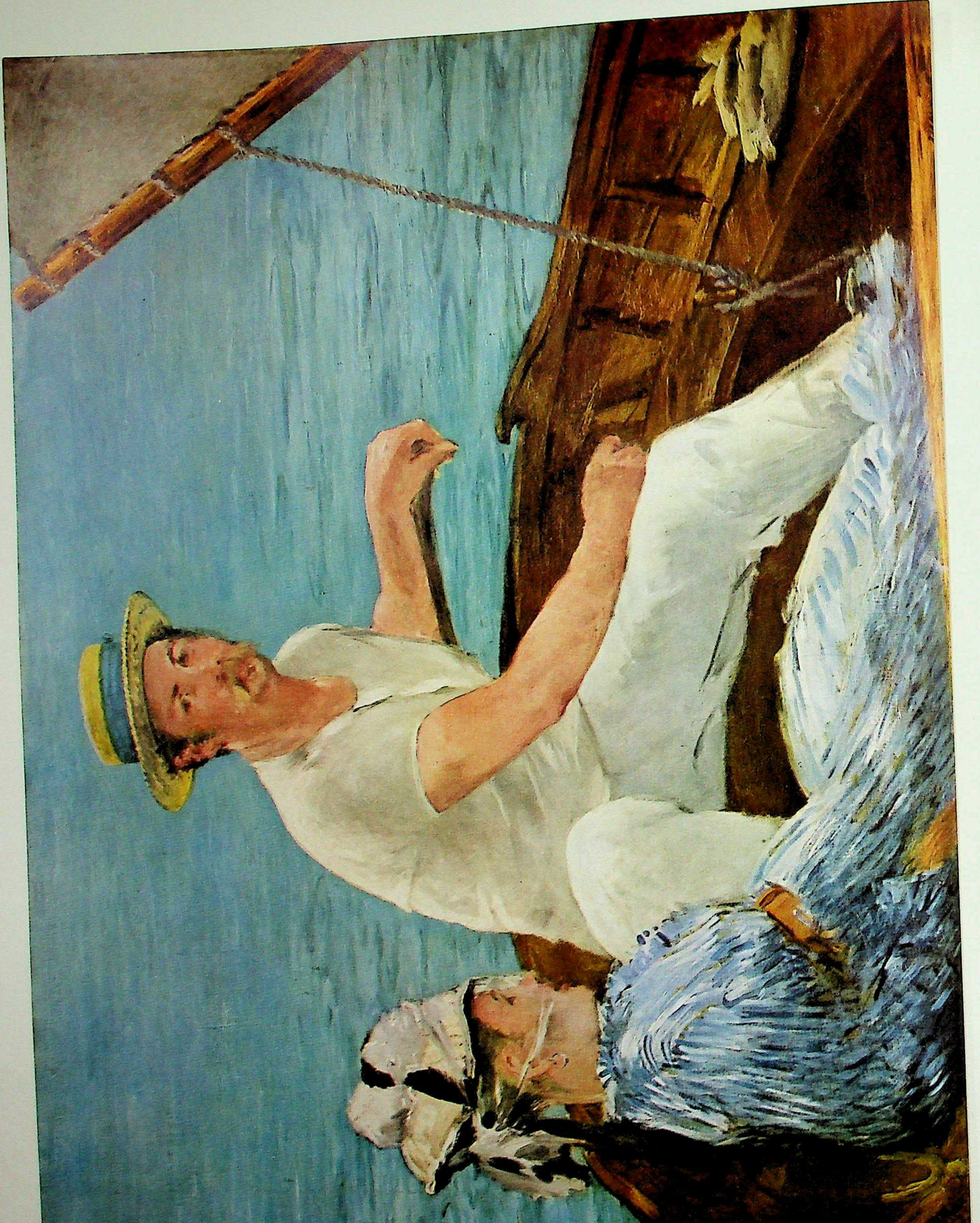

PLATE TWELVE

BOATING AT ARGENTEUIL (1874)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 38¼″ × 51¼″

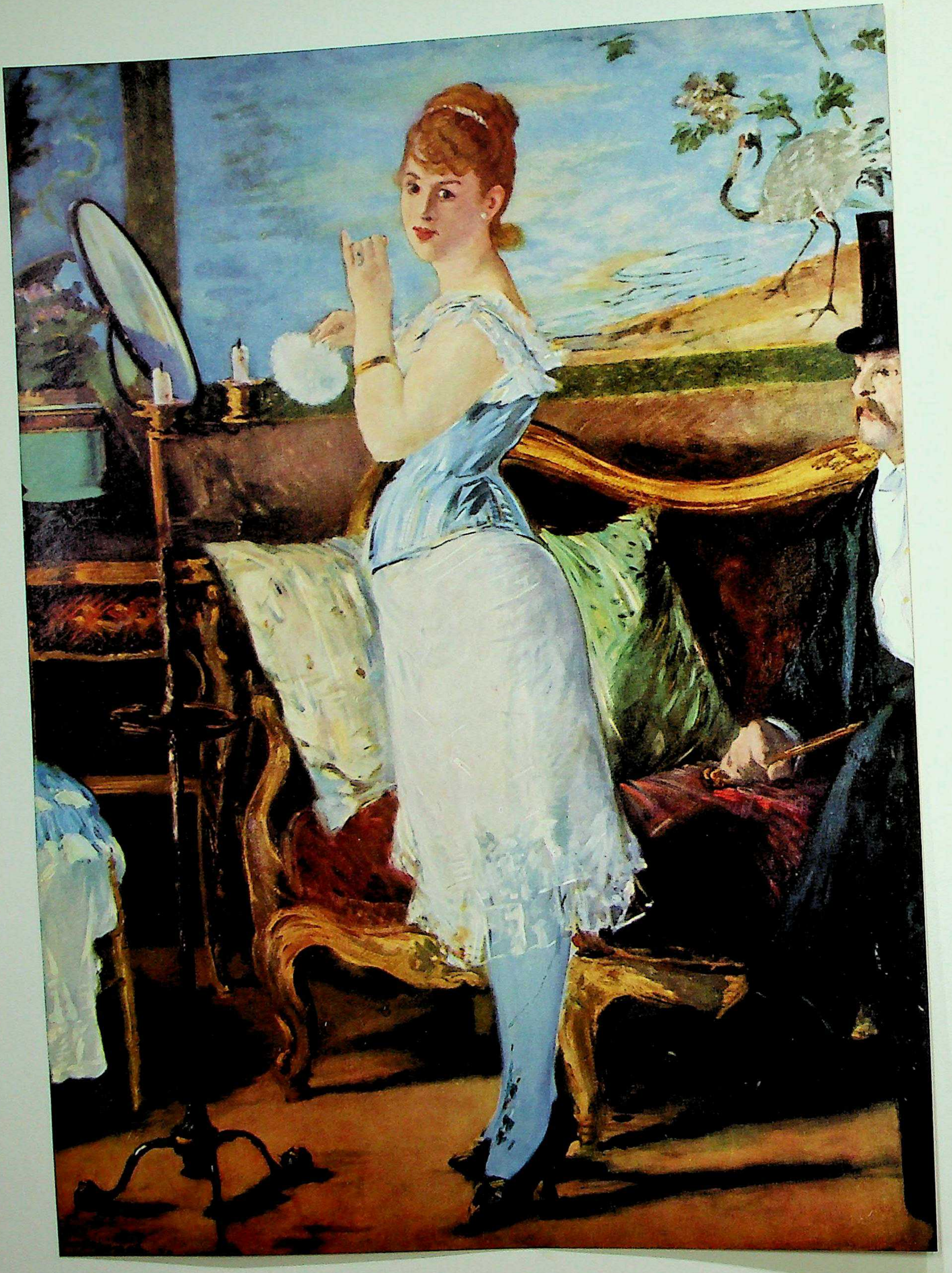

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PLATE THIRTEEN

NANA (1877)

Kunsthalle, Hamburg. 60⅝" × 45¼"

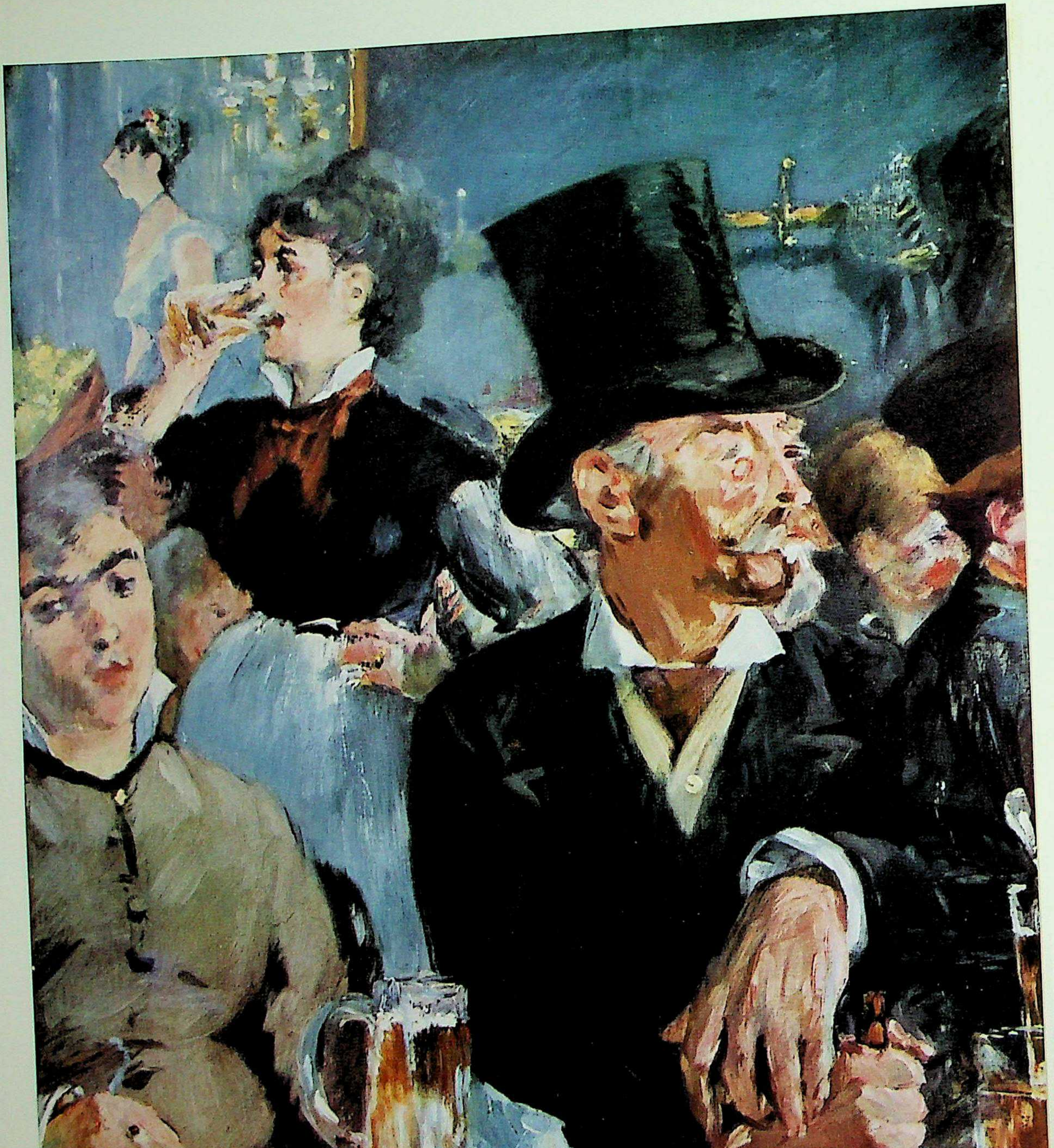

PLATE FOURTEEN

AT THE CAFÉ (1878)

Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore. $18\frac{5}{8}'' \times 15\frac{3}{8}''$

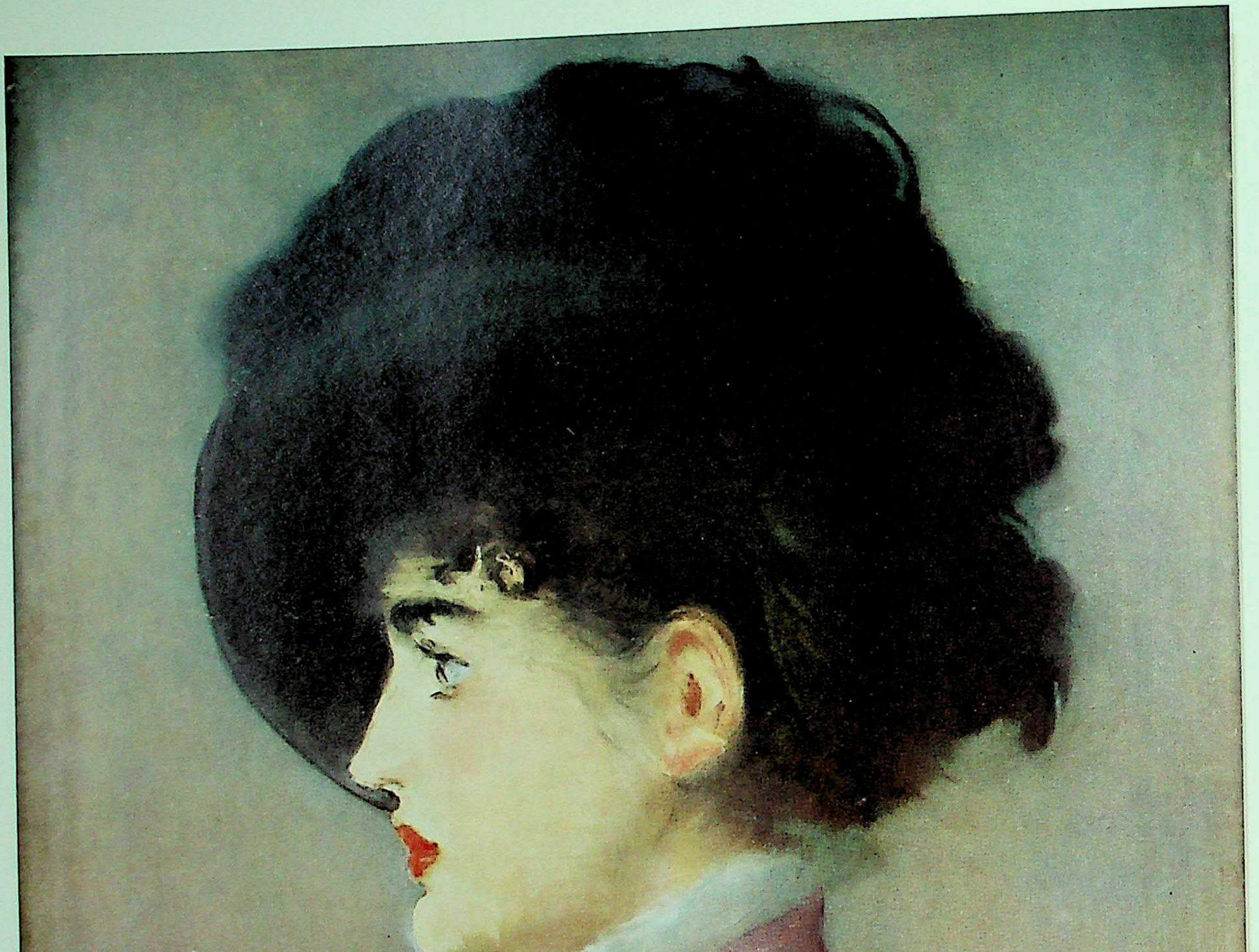

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PLATE FIFTEEN

PORTRAIT OF IRMA BRUNNER (about 1882)

The Louvre, Paris. Pastel, 21¼″ × 17¾″

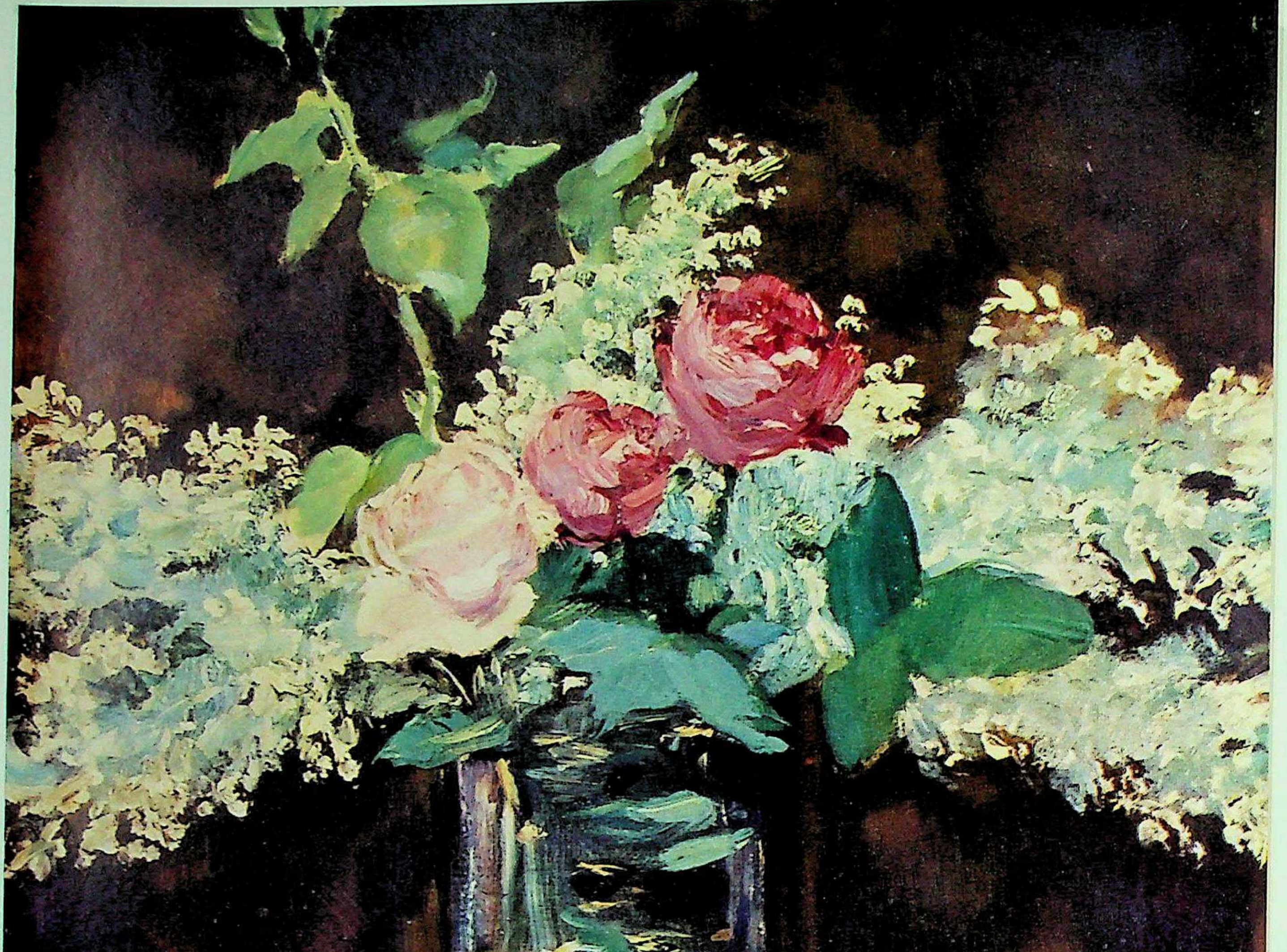
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PLATE SIXTEEN

WHITE LILACS AND ROSES (1883)

Paul Rosenberg Gallery, New York. 22″ × 18″